

**Program designed to curb high-risk behavior**

## Virginia Guardsman participate in pilot adventure program

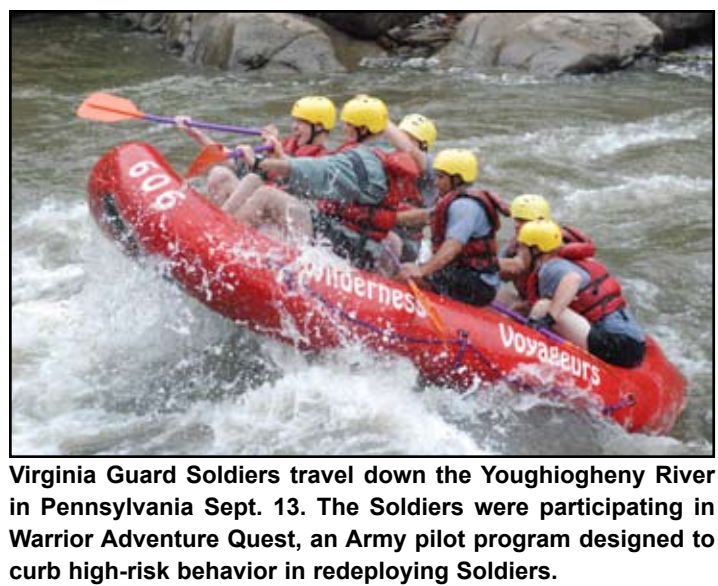
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A company of Virginia Guard Soldiers traveled to Pennsylvania Sept. 13 to participate in an Army pilot program known as Warrior Adventure Quest. The program is designed to curb high-risk behavior in Soldiers returning from deployment by giving them an outlet through high-adventure activities in an outdoor environment such as skydiving, paintball, rock climbing and mountain biking.

Soldiers of C Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Brigade Combat Team, based out of Leesburg and Manassas, Va., were the second unit to participate in the WAQ program in Ohiopyle, Pa. The program was first tested earlier this week in Vicenza, Italy by Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry.

After the long trip from Virginia to Pennsylvania, the infantrymen arrived at Wilderness Voyageurs, a white water rafting tour company. There they changed out of their Army Combat Uniforms and in to their Army Physical Fitness Uniforms, were given a safety briefing, and sent down the Youghiogheny River in the provided rafts.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/WarriorQuest.html>



**Virginia National Guard News Headlines**

**Virginia units ready to act during Pentagon's 9/11 ceremony**

Thanks to "behind the scenes" assistance from Soldiers and Airmen of the Virginia National Guard, President Bush honored those who perished in the terrorist attacks of 9/11 with a memorial at the Pentagon on the seventh anniversary of the event.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/9-11ceremony.html>

**New commander takes over at 329th Regional Support Group**

On the sun-washed field, behind the chapel on the Virginia State Military Reservation, in Virginia Beach, Va., members of the 329th Regional Support Group observed as Col. Timothy Williams assumed command from Col. Janice Igou during a change of command ceremony on Sept. 14.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/329thCoC.html>

**91st Troop Command conducts change of command ceremony**

Col. Steven T. Scott assumed command of the Richmond-based 91st Troop Command in a ceremony held at Fort Pickett Sept. 14, marking the end of a three-year command tour for Col. David A. Archer.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/91stTCCoC.html>

**Air Guard imagery analyst among top in field**

Recently promoted Staff Sgt. Jennilee Gergets, 192nd Intelligence Squadron, was recognized this summer as the Air Force Air Reserve Component Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Airman of the Year (Level II).

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/gergets.html>

### Mark Your Calendars!

**Oct. 1: CFC Kickoff**

The Virginia National Guard's Combined Federal Campaign will officially kick off with a ceremony at noon in Building 316 at Fort Pickett. For more information, contact Maj. Kent Doane at 434-298-6228.

**Oct. 8: 266th Military Police Company Departure Ceremony**

The 266th Military Police Company will conduct a Departure Ceremony at 12 p.m. at the Manassas Boys and Girls Club located at 9501 Dean Park Lane in Manassas.

**Oct. 13: 180th Engineer Company Departure Ceremony**

The 180th Engineer Company will conduct a Departure Ceremony at 10 a.m. at Powhatan High School located at 1800 Judes Ferry Road in Powhatan.

# Soldiers, families gather for Yellow Ribbon Program

More than 800 Soldiers and families from 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry gathered in Williamsburg, Va., Sept 13-14, to participate in the Army National Guard Deployment Cycle Support Yellow Ribbon Program.

The Soldiers and families traveled to Williamsburg by charter bus and stayed in local hotels. Once there, they attended informational briefings on Saturday morning and spent the rest of day bonding with family members at Busch Gardens. At a picnic held at Busch Gardens, Soldiers and families had the opportunity to talk directly to community service providers to get more information regarding available programs and benefits. Most Soldiers and families used the Busch Gardens "Here's to the Heroes" program that allows servicemembers and their dependents one free ticket each.

The Yellow Ribbon Program was mandated by the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act and is a robust, preventative, proactive support program for Soldiers and their families that provides the continuum of care needed to ensure the Soldiers and families receive the care and services they need to support a normal life through the entire deployment cycle.

The briefings offered by the YRP focus attention on the health and wellbeing of the Soldier and family as a total package in order to fully address the complex and ongoing needs resulting from fulfilling military commitments. The briefings are designed to help the Soldiers and Families navigate through the benefits, entitlements and programs available.

"As important as the briefs are, it is equally important for the Soldiers and families to get to know each other," said Lt. Col. William L. Zana, the battalion commander. "The relationships that are established during this weekend between spouses and between Soldiers are just as important to us as anything else we do here. It is a huge challenge to get those connections normally. This is a rare opportunity for us to make connections with the Soldiers in our unit. Busch Gardens is just a magnet to get everyone here."

The weekend was an opportunity for the battalion to focus its energy on its Soldiers and its families.

"Active duty has the time and resources to do this with the families. In the Guard, we have to use our drill weekends for training. There is not much time for the fun stuff with the families," said Sgt. 1st Class Kris Kindoll.

The YRP is still in the developmental stages in the Virginia National Guard, but according to many of the Soldiers and families, the weekend was a success.

"The Yellow Ribbon and Freedom Salute programs are amazing," said Liz C. Sweeney, wife of Sgt. 1st Class Darren J Sweeney. "It is a great opportunity that we can connect not only as a family, but also to spend time with the people who became his family while he was gone. This gives me an in to a different side of his life."

The YRP is tailored for the specific needs of National Guard Soldiers and families. Active duty Soldiers and families have the



**Families from 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry speak with community service providers at the command's Yellow Ribbon Program held at Busch Gardens Sept. 13.**

benefit of being located near a post. The YRP brings many of the services provided on a military installation and makes those services available to the Soldiers and families.

Many active-duty Soldiers do not have to worry about looking for a job when they return from a deployment. The Virginia National Guard has partnered with the Virginia Employment Commission to assist returning Soldiers to find jobs in Virginia.

"That's a big hit," said 1st Lt. Scott A. Nivens, Virginia Yellow Ribbon Program project officer. "One of the biggest problems Soldiers face when returning from deployment is finding a new job."

Though 3rd Battalion enjoyed many of the benefits of the YRP, the program is still under development, and the Virginia National Guard is working to perfect the program to offer a great program that will help address the unique needs of the National Guard and its families.

"We have to integrate the families, especially with the Guard. If you don't integrate the families in the Guard, you'll lose the Guard," said Sgt. 1st Class Kris Kindoll.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/sept2008/yellowribbon.html>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### Army to test Warrior Adventure Quest

[http://www.armymwr.com/portal/news/display.asp?NEWS\\_ID=869](http://www.armymwr.com/portal/news/display.asp?NEWS_ID=869)

### Virginia Guard Family Programs Office

<http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/familyprograms/index.html>

### Military One Source

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>